Wordeater Issue 25

Wordeater exists as a forum of creative expression for the Joliet Junior College community, including students, alumni, faculty, and staff. It celebrates the diversity of ideas, beliefs, values, language, media, and people of its community. It seeks to promote artistic, personal, and political expression, democratic values, and social justice, including fairness and equal opportunity, rights, and access. Wordeater rejects censorship and attempts to reflect the artistry and lives of its community, while embracing JJC's Core Values of respect, integrity, collaboration, humor and well-being, innovation, and quality.

Wordeater #125 & Fall '11 E-Zine

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Front Cover

Bear Light

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Back Cover

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The Blowout

Mike Bonifacio

Our wounded chevy cavalier
hurtles down the asphalt ribbon
blaring songs of freedom from
two blown speakers, while
in the white city
ahead
steak-fat failed financiers
and crappy car company autocrats
dictate the prose
of their bailout birthday presents
to the commando in chief.
Then a tire blows
because these tires blow and we
find ourselves stranded in the
wine-dark night wondering who
it was that said
imagination is a good servant and a bad master.

Ideals in Bloom

Erin Foley

I stand among a field of wild flowers
alighting my hand on the flowers.

Like a child, the sun hides behind clouds;
the gusting wind swirls among the flowers.

Clouds painted angry shades of gray and black,
wonder if there will be showers for the flowers?

Splot a single rain drop falls;
I dance around my wild flowers

Abandoning them as I break for cover;
under the oak tree I gaze at the flowers.

Their petals upturned embracing the cool droplets
they sway with the wind, my wild flowers.

Their own dance being performed.
Entranced by the blinding beauty of the field of wild flowers.

Flower Rebellion

Chris Salgado

The flower shouts fuck you!
Shouts fuck you to its harsh mother,
who blindly throws the rain
and the wind and the snow
and the heat.
She throws it all at her child,
her baby with no remorse
at the harm she wants to cause
her child.

The flower doesn't care!
The flower holds its ground,
stands up to its totalitarian
leader with no fear
at the consequences of its actions.
The flower fights back, fights back
against its mother's ignorance
and fights back against
its iron fist rule and narrow
way of thinking.

What a shame poor mother!
There's no way for you to hold control,
the flower is too outspoken
and the flower is highly opinionated
and the flower is too defiant
and self-reliant.

Your actions are futile, mother,
the flower isn't listening anymore,
the flower has left you
and has moved on to follow a different
path, nay! the flower is following its
own path, a path created by ambition
and for the purpose of itself,
the flower is no longer bound by the chains
that you hold so shortly, mother!

Afternoon Delight

Paul Schroeder
Department of Nursing, Allied Health, & Emergency Services

Did You Ever Imagine...?

Beth Sadler

Did you ever imagine…?
Did you ever imagine…?

A world without land
Or a beach without sand?

A tree without bark
Or a night without dark?

A book without pages
Or a zoo without cages?

Did you ever imagine…?
Did you ever imagine…?

Jeans without a zipper
Or a boat without a skipper?

A bank without money
Or a hive without honey?

A heart without love
And always deprived of?

Did you ever imagine…?
Did you ever imagine…?

Haikus

Kara Ponce

In every mind
gray matter disintegrates
the dust lies like snow

Relish the
faltering season
pickled sweet

I lay upon my
soft belly---the plush carpet
smells of dog vomit

On Earl Gray mornings
rain streaks down gritty windows
smearing dirt make-up

Where is the tiger
burning bright, inspiring stilled,
witherer hands to write?

Sheath thy words!
They battle is won,
Pacifist

Open atrium
vermillion chambers
so light, flowing

Molded march monkeys
the marzipan malcontents
with unblinking eyes

Moonbeams (For Bessie Smith)

Erick Shaffern

I sleep in moonbeams and fade like the stars. I rise with the sun and sometimes the dogs. I owe my education to the gutter.

Girls and guns parade my vision. (A few dollars gets pretty far in this town.) I say hello to the mistresses on Merchant, the drunkards on State, and the bankers on Pilfer. What of it all?

The sun peaks like a pervert over the red mountains of the desert, it shines like a god in New England, and here, in the heart of the city, in the 21st century saloons, where pleasures are as deep as a senator's pockets, the sun melts like a candle 'neath a blowtorch. It oozes and sweats--and all the junkies pray. For what?--I don't know, and I suspect they don't either.

The train rolls and roars and snorts like some war horse. She blows her maddening horn, as if Revelations has begun. But no god arrives, no savior to settle the storms, no kings rest on these bus stop benches, no deity sloops in the alleys or creeps on the rainbow walls.

The sun beats on metal bars and taxi cars--heat rises like the saints and melts dreams and ice cream cones.

And all the factories smoke, and all the people smoke, and all my friends get flipped to the street and walked on by ragged gym shoes--and I swim through bourbon breath and duck and dodge businessmen and beggars--unsure which one is the worst. I find drooping alleyways, sprayed with ancient art of which Italy could never compete.

I break bread with the rats--I find they are better companions than most.

I read the sacred scribblings left by bold men as they profess their love for all to see.

The priest? I hide and wait till they pass. But when I am caught--I nod and smile and think empty thoughts--and steal away their dreams and dare them with my eyes. But the tongue slaps "Thanks" and I explode when they leave.

And I watch the people go buy--I think their thoughts and swallow their souls. I watch them all, the suits with ties like nooses, the reckless youth with broken smiles and quiet desperations, and the women, the lovely, sun-blessed girls in blowing dresses all wrapped in earth. And my heart shakes like a ship. A brief look of the eyes can hold me over for days; a pretty pair of lips can make me feel new; and

the touch of that warm strong skin could make me weep with joy. A pretty girl of pure manners can fix a crooked spine, feed a hungry belly. An angel, slipped through the clouds to this lonelier side, can make all things holy once more.

And when this city begins to look like the last, when I find no new faces, when I've slept in every corner and bathed in every fountain, when I've had and lost love, when I've been thrown out of every church, when I've grown suspicious and tired and torn and desperate and hungry and find no pleasure in this time and this place, I find a good man or a slow train and set my sights towards the setting sun.

splatter alex
Nicole Garriott

Crumpled Creativity : Paper Pantoum

Emily Hansen

White paper ball sails into the metal wire trash can
I cut the page deep with the sharpness of my words
They danced from their place upon my tongue
Twisting like jittery men who have a story to tell

I cut the page deep with the sharpness of my words
Ink sails across pages with fluidity that cannot be faked
Twisting like jittery men who have a story to tell
Left- right – left – Marching towards imagination

Ink sails across pages with fluidity that cannot be faked
Cowardly thoughts uncoil and explode from inside a pistol
Left – right – left –Marching towards imagination
Tall dark soldier stops with no indication of the trigger

Cowardly thoughts uncoil and explode from inside a pistol
Ballerina flats write in the soil to tell a tale through dance
Tall dark soldier stops with no indication of the trigger
Nutcracker clumsily puts one foot in front of the other

Ballerina flats write in the soil to tell a tale through dance
Painful cracking of bones ensue when the page is unfolded
Nutcracker clumsily puts one foot in front of the other
Fireworks pop with sizzling tenacity as electricity sparks

Painful cracking of bones ensue when the page is unfolded
Smoothing the chunky smudges of peanut butter across the jelly
Fireworks pop with sizzling tenacity as electricity sparks
An angel's wings span stretches infinitely across oceans of letters

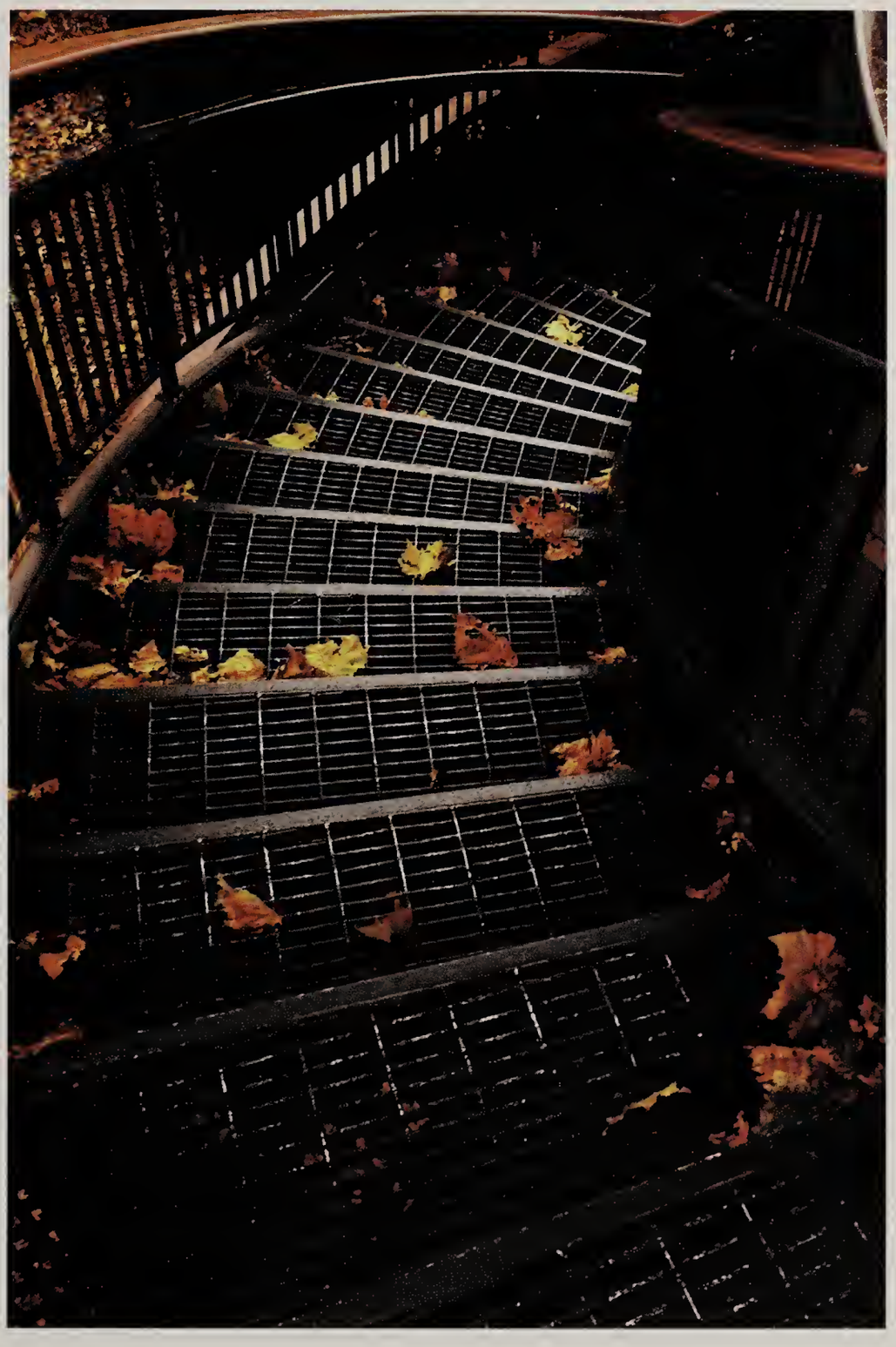
Smoothing the chunky smudges of peanut butter across the jelly
Greek muses enchant ideas out from under their shroud
An angel's wing span stretches infinitely across oceans of letters
Quill pens, dagger sharp, fly from the sky like shooting stars

Greek muses enchant ideas out from under their shroud
Quivering, they fall onto the page like scared children
Quill pens, dagger sharp, fly from the sky like shooting stars
Scratched out words are equivalent to blank slates

Quivering, they fall onto the page like scared children
They danced from their place upon my tongue
Scratched out words are equivalent to blank slates
White paper ball sails into the metal wire trash can

The Stairway

Terry L. Adams
Fine Arts



Age of Divorce

Jonathan M. O'Neil

I realized that my failed past relationship is the essence of our era. It's that typical story of lovers separating once they've discovered the vastness of freedom from obligation and the finite nature of human existence. I was reminded of this when a friend came to me one night for a place to stay. He had been involved in a two-and-a-half year relationship with an older woman that came to an end because he discovered this same vast, prospective freedom.

He had suddenly found the opportunity to pursue a girl who he had fashioned years before would be a perfect fit to his persona. He, like many of this generation, was inclined to take the out with the old, in with the new approach to things and, consequently, he left the woman for the girl. The woman had genuine potential to be a good wife, but he cut it short, enticed to chase the ever so desirable temptress of his dreams. He and this girl, who had a power over him like strings attached to limp-limbs, immediately began a passionate love affair.

It was for perhaps one week that that fruitless fornication filled his foolish, fickle mind with a fetid, festering funk; undetected. It was masked by his rampant desire and hollow bliss. He became her engine. He found her a new job, introduced her to new people, gave her gifts, took her out shopping and finished the night with a nice dinner and a show. She shared his bed every night and, while physically separated, he kept in constant contact with her. Texts, phone calls, visits at work with lunch, even stopping by her house to say hi to her mother a couple times; it was like they had been together for years.

With this new fling, he had completely forgotten about his fair-natured, better-acquainted ex, the woman. It was like the past two-n-a-half years didn't matter at all. They were like a small piece of childhood that gets left behind, like playing a sport in grade school but never again. He had left a sturdy foundation for a sand dune, and was hoping restart building his home on the shifting sands of a beautiful beach. It was a leap of unprecedented faith he took and he chose to forget the benefit of having a solid foothold.

The woman had had two young boys who he had opted willingly to foster and act as a father figure for. These two boys were six and eight years old and were greatly influenced by him. He coached their little-league baseball team and would bring them to see both the Cubs and the Sox whenever he had the chance to. He worked hard and so did she. She was self-sufficient and had a solid professional future. He was young, diligent, and anxious to become a family man…Just a phase, I suppose.

His relationship with the girl ended quickly and left him shamefully distraught. He was enraged by the nature of her flight and the childish manner in which she opted to work it out for friendship. Apparently, due to his extreme attraction…obsession…with this girl, he made a jealous remark that is typical of the uneasiness one feels in a new, almost-to-good-to-be-true relationship. She responded by severing their relationship in an act of defiance. He responded with rage and recklessness.

He confessed that he had skipped work that day and instead had spent most of the morning and early afternoon drinking various brands of cheap forty-ounce beer by the hour. I agreed to idea of drinking '40s' because, being a daily drinker myself, I know it is not only cheaper than a twelve-pack, but a larger quantity of alcohol. I then attributed a lot of his still steaming rage to the after effects of those 160-200 ounces of beer he had consumed earlier.

By the time he admitted to skipping work and drinking excessively, he was already calming. He began mourning for his loss of the woman, or rather, his abandonment of the woman. He was beginning to see how reckless he had been for so little reward. I comforted him by reminding him that the woman was in fact ten years older than him and before he knew it she would look like a baby dino…uh…well; she was older than him…and menopause…

Anyways, he was amused and started talking about how we used to pick up girls. It was when (as he recalls it) he was 'fucking everything in town'. I made a remark about how his dog did seem to have trouble standing up, almost as though its hips were worn out, and we polished off the last of my whiskey. As we snuffed out the last cigarettes of the night, I reminded him that he can only live once and what's done is done; "Tomorrow you'll be fine because you'll realize

that you're not dead yet, and as long as you've got enough blood flowing in you, you'll be able to sustain an erection." We laughed as we separated ways in the dark foyer.
Does only a fool throw away the Sage's wisdom for the Sailor's stories? Is he a fool for making the decisions he did? Wisdom is a result of experience and he has, though carelessly, set himself up with an endless potential for more experiences…more wisdom. This is, after all, the Age of Divorce.

My friend contacted me a week later to tell me he had contracted Chlamydia.

Reflection
Kate Muller

Hill-Top Ballet

Aaron Wiley

A valiant sea
Of blue branched jays
Dance on the beams
Of the ballad's rays.
Violet pedals join in,
Fluttering their feet-
Lush pools of sin
Bathe their tumulus seats.
These mounds stand tall-
A noble arching greet,
Where dancers tumble and fall,
Then sing with the wheat
Where the dew carries note
Of its subtle toned beat
And the spiders devote
Their little spindling feet
To form groves, nodes,
And Spain's borders
To ascend the tune up-hill
Once more
To ready, readily,
The buoyant repeat.
All the while,
A cloud drags his feet.
Alluringly sweet:
The lullaby of the ground,
Has the flora and fauna
Systematically found.

A Careful Brush

J.M.U.

Colors and words are thick, voluminous, and moist. They take on shapes and textures and are read by the ears, hands, and eyes—one language. Even emptiness, or a lack of substance speaks. The men and women in their ironed shirts and pants know this, have known this all along.

"I can't..." she starts to say. We stand together on the cement balcony of the apartment. I watch the surge of headlights below, seven stories down. She steps forward and touches my arm; I look at her and wait but she says nothing, and I am not a mind-reader.

"What is it?" I demand. "Say it." She retracts her hand as if bitten and her jaw clenches. I grab her by the wrist and twist it.

"Go on and say it!" I tell her again. "Say what you have to say!"

I wait. There is just our breath between us, little twin clouds that dissolve into the noisy city air. I pull her closer, so that our faces are nearly touching. She screws her eyes shut and sobs. It is a short, soft sob—a sob she covers quickly with her free hand and when she opens her eyes again they are shiny and tired. *She* is tired.

"I can't," she says at last. Her voice is like a leaf in the wind. "I can't say it," she says; and I let go.

"Get out," I say. "I said, get the fuck out."

She does. I wait on the balcony. She calls her mother to pick her up and packs clothes for her and Marie-Èlise. Marie-Èlise is already asleep and has to be carried outside in her comforter. They are gone, and I am alone.

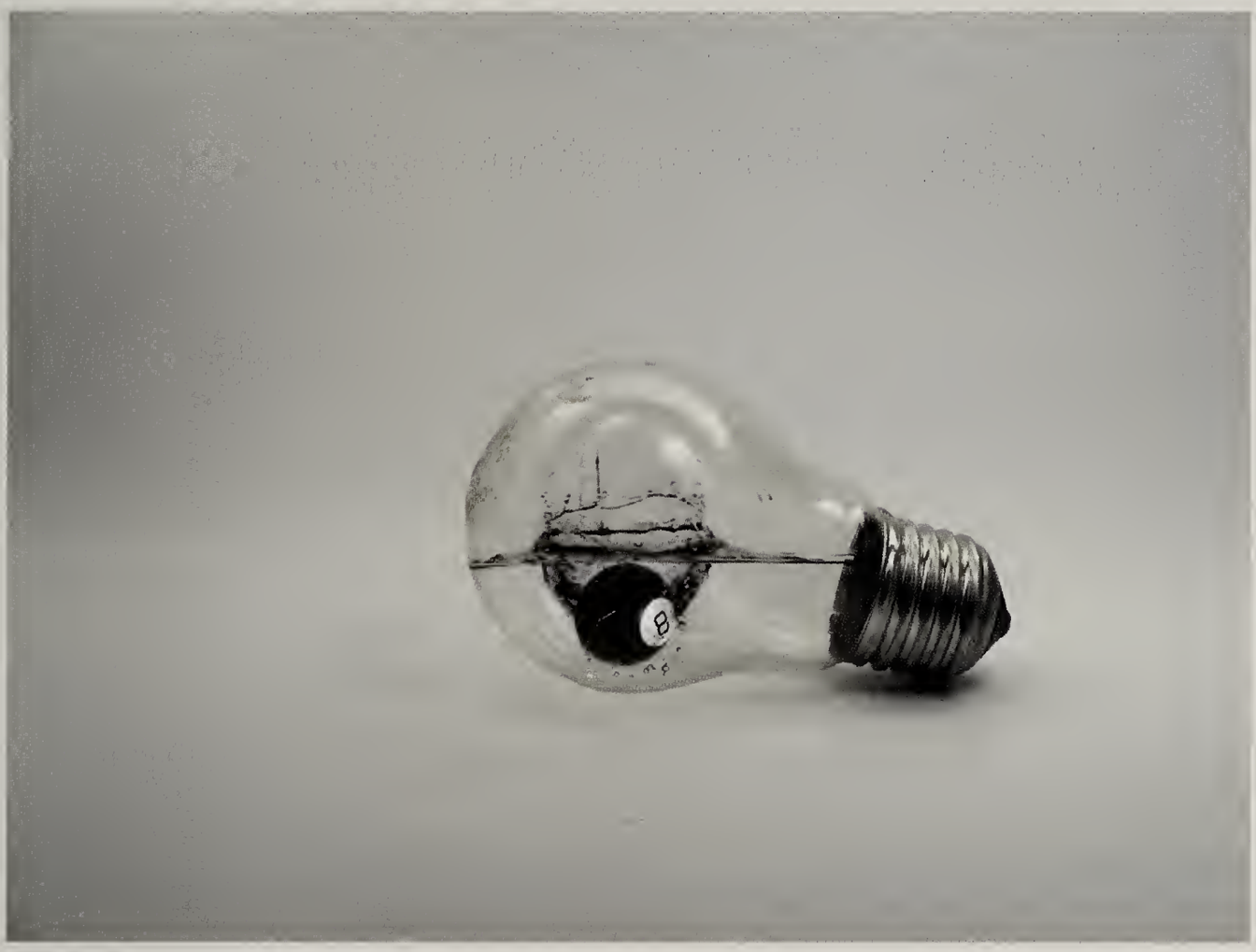
Marie-Èlise calls the next morning. I cannot find the phone and stumble to the machine, my eyes bleary and burning as she leaves her message:

"Papa," she cries. "Papa! You won't *believe* what happened! A bird flew in the window and Grandma killed it with her *shoe*! It was—what? What did you say? Oh...*oh. Oui*, Maman. Papa! I love you; I have to go now. See you soon!" She hangs up.

I kneel in the dark and see her there, hear her sweet-candy

laughter. I would like to hold her again, but my hands are wet and dripping. She watches me, waiting.

"Shh," I whisper. "Don't tell Maman." Then, brushing the bottles aside, I put my hands in the puddle and push my head under.



8Ball Lightbulb
Nicole Garriott

In the Middle of the Night

Kevin Sealy

In the middle of the night
we run and jump through
golden halos hanging on their side like hoops
collecting scars as we go
but feeling no pain

In the middle of the night
we fly in our inflatable plane
bouncing about the laughing clouds
defying all our doubters
like a new-world Hughes
with his old-world Spruce Goose
when we land we deflate it
and put it in our backpack
then stroll off into the everlasting sunset

In the middle of the night
Ramona Flowers offers you the chance
to be number eight
but you don't like to fight
and don't think you're evil
so you politely decline
her electric-lime haired advances
and wonder
what happened to Scott

In the middle of the night
you wander in wonder
alongside the Duomo
then hang a right
and walk straight up Khufu's Pyramid
before crossing the street
and looking down
at the neon-coated lights of the Strip
with child-like amazement.

Visited

Chalisse Breeden

The frost of death thick with her presence
gray green vapors flutter about my lashes
a taste of her on my tongue..stone stiff..i combat swallowing ashes
sheet deep, she hovers horizontally above me
her mouth forming silent harmonies bouncing off my breathing
closed eyes pray for dreaming
but just as thuds of my life scream in my hearts rapid beating
she is here
she is real
her visiting giving my third eye a greeting
reaching
her glowing expression becoming angry
I'm shock locked in the streaming
she scoops through me and my being looking for keys for freeing
a kiss of life succulent on my lips
she misses its prickling sips
she dips
but realms skip over and under and attempts are missed

Beginnings and endings go hand and hand but can't mix and still exist as is

She rises cold unable to straddle the fence
I lay breathing in short inches
my third eye watering from the visit.

God Has Risen

Miranda Gothard

Uriah's Death

Miranda Gothard

Sorrow is a combustion of energy, all stored,
prepared, waiting to release the fury
of frenzied excitement--
the lull between shocks of remembrance.

Now the sorrow dissipates. no longer
a choking fog but a heart-sickening haze.

Now the shock dissolves, like a powdered ball
in a bathtub, clouding the cleansing waters of reality.

Perceiving normality as altered,
a spoof, clout judgment, a faulty assessment,
imaginations gone awry:

Too sore from feeling sore,
expecting the lash of loss to strike
at any moment.

Eventually: instead, I have peace, knowing
the suffering is over, ever as enchanted as I was;
with reliability, a relationship proven.

I'm spent. This may be 'fin'.

Salts, Sweets, and Sours

Maddie McGinnis

Her breathing was shallow and rushed, her chest rising and falling quickly with the sharp intake of breath, moving her red sweater and gold necklace at a rapid pace. Brushing against the edge of the wooden table, she slightly stumbled, making her breath quicken more with panic over the possibility of spilling the plate of food that was currently being cradled in her arms. Her exhausted arms began to shake with the extra time holding the over-laden plate of yalanci dolmas, meatless stuffed grape leaves.

Setting the plate down on the ancient wooden table, she stopped to examine her attempts at a scrumptious feast. She probably had too much food, especially for two people, but it was not often that she was able to see him. She saw the basket filled with mountains of pita bread, its companion, a creamy, sultry, yogurt cucumber sauce. The sauce was in a ceramic bowl of terracotta red. Next to the red bowl, on a similarly red platter, laid baked fish with tahini sauce. Fish splayed out, surrounded and mounted by onions, tomatoes, and lemons. There definitely was a lot of food, she observed, but he was worth the time and effort.

They had been planning this getaway for weeks, dodging his busy schedule and her comparatively trivial plans. Thinking of how long it had been since they had embraced made her even more anxious. Turning away from the table, running her long, tan fingers over brown pants, she headed towards the stereo. Her padded feet gently pressing against the floor made very little noise, but a light swish and slide could be heard from the rubbing of her wool socks. The floor crackled in a few places under her light weight, fooling her into pondering if she had gained weight. She shook her head and giggled a little knowing she hadn't, her long waves of hair lightly brushing the sweater causing snaps of static electricity with the shake of her head.

The black CD player was settled on a bookshelf that was filled with CD upon CD. Jazz, classical, opera, salsa, hip hop CDs were passed up by her searching fingers until her hand stopped upon her male protectorate and confidante, Sinatra. Putting slight pressure against the buttons, rather slick under her fingers, she watched the player of music slip its tongue out to gather the shiny disk. The calming, crooning of

Frank soon blared through the house.

Gliding away, she started lighting candles that encircled photos of the two of them together, her mother and father, even her sisters. The only photograph that caught her attention was the one of him and her lying in bed together; it had been a rainy afternoon. He had snuck away and she had quickly and persistently leapt after him.

Day dreaming led to other daydreams, leaning against a burgundy bookshelf in a daze, leaving her unaware of the ringing phone. She began to dance with Sinatra, lightly gliding around her cheerful, mellow yellow living room. She heard the friction of her socks against the cream-colored rug under her feet, the slight pressure of her feet rubbing the rug against the wooden floor causing a hum that went along with her confidante's sultry and comforting voice. Her buttermilk leather furniture faded into the background as she twirled and spun around the room, losing her balance, she fell on the floor in a fit of anxious giggles.

Back on her feet, she headed towards the kitchen to pour herself a sturdy glass of dry, red wine that was chilling in the modest refrigerator. She entered the dining room with the feast set out before her, imagining the saltiness of the fish and the salty taste of other pleasures. Eying the cucumber sauce, she indulged herself a piece of pita with sauce. Her eyes fluttered over the magnificent texture of the smooth sauce on top of the crusty bread; crunching into the refreshing cucumbers brought her eyes to an alert open again.

Looking at the clock and noticing the time made her uneasy. He was late. Very late. Uncommonly late for him. She stood up, walked into the kitchen starting to feel a little flustered and worried; she walked to the counter grasping the phone. Before she could start to dial the number she knew by heart, she saw the glaring red eye representing the answering machine's occupation by a voicemail. Hopefully she pressed the button to play the message.

His voice came out rushed, but not without understanding and articulation; she listened as a starving person devours food.

"Look Lena, I don't think we can see each other anymore. My wife wants us to go to counseling. She wants to work things out instead of ending them. It would be better for my kids; you know Anthony, Kelly, Logan and Emily? Staying with my wife, Diana, really would be better for them… and she really does love me. I know that I always complained about her when you and I would sneak away together." At the mention

of their running away together, she thought of Italy together: the heat, the romance, the crispness of the new environment… all a far off painting of perfection. Perfection that was now being blasted with the subtle dynamite of his words as he continued, "Well, she missed me a lot. She even found out about us; all she wants is to stay together. We were fun, but this is my family. We were a mistake. Good bye, Lena."

Lena stared at the maniacal red eye that was beginning to fade, just as her affair was. Her chest barely moved as she slowly began to breathe again. Her feet shuffled against the hard wood floor, which suddenly seemed like a coffin and not a subtle reminder of times heartily enjoyed. Her feet led her to the dining room to the smell of the food and the emptiness of her stomach. The candles were slowly starting to flicker and die out, as she grabbed a plate and threw food on the terracotta plate.

Shoving the delicate grape leaf in her mouth, she squished the rice and vegetables between her furious jaws. The crunching of the fresh and delicate vegetables grew louder within her head along with the beating and pounding of her internal drum. Next, she grasped her wine to drown her mouth and ready it for the fish; her breathing had increased to a worrisome rate causing a slight whistle in her chest, but she couldn't be bothered with such a thing when there was so much to eat and account for. As she shoveled the lemons that had been lying on the fish into her mouth, she tasted the sourness and the disappointment. Quickly she dug her fork into the fish, only to have the salt of the fish mix with the salt of her tears.

Grow into me not you

Sieshay Jones

With the first look
they think they know me
at their first glance
they swear they understand me
like an open book, they attempt to read me
labels they post on me
you cannot begin to tell me who I am
so do not mistake me
and throw me into a category
my life is a novel
it's my story
I flip like the light switch
there is no now special part of me
everyone in this world has many,
I do mean plenty
parts that make up thee
like a tree we branch off
we grow, we change, we search, we find
life truly is blind
if you don't watch your back you won't have a spine
if you don't think fast you won't have a mind
if you don't move quick, you will lose your swiftness
the wise man holds the key to life
the man who doesn't search
can never find, he will never see
he holds death's key
he is the man I keep away from me
so who am I?
I have yet to find that answer
only because I am searching for the best me I can be
so when you stop, point and judge me
It is not a reflection of me
it reflects you
the person you elected to be
with the first look
they think they know me
at their first glance
they swear they understand me
like an open book they attempt to read me
labels they post on me
you can not begin to tell me who I am
because I dictate what I am.

Glowstick Marching Band

naDLosja

Square Pegs

K. B. Moore

Square pegs go into square holes...
What if I have a round one?
You won't. Square pegs go into square holes...
Round pegs exist, don't they?
Yes but...
So what if I have a round one?
Just focus on the square ones for now.
Well, what if my square peg is larger than the whole?
It won't be.
Large square pegs exist, don't they?
Yes, but you don't have to worry about that right now.
Why not?
Because these square pegs fit. They're fabricated to fit.
Fabricated to fit...
Yes. You should get used to that.
But I don't want things to be ... fabricated.
How unfortunate. You're going to have a tough time then.
With pegs?
With life.

Talking to Doors

Richie Vavrina

I can't believe this. I'm talking to a door with a light behind it. Again.

"I did some research," I said. I always have to say that when I'm talking with the door, or else it assumes I haven't. "I spent some time and found a camera lens that would work for what I need."

"How much?"
"$250."
"I don't think so. We'll find something for cheaper."

And that was it. The door wasn't interested in any defense I could conjure. I don't know why I thought there would be a different response. I've nearly boiled these conversations down to a science. Maybe a cough gets thrown into the mix to shake things up a bit.

I should be clearer. I wasn't spending the door's budget – this was *my* money. It was always my money, and I had the courtesy to consult the great door every time. How dare it manhandle me like this! I'm an adult with rights!

But it's all the same unpleasantness; you're not talking to a human – you're talking to a door. Humans can see some value in your work, and would like you to defend it. Or at least that's how Atticus did it....

But doors, they're Boolean. They don't care about the grounds of your proposal. They don't have to look at your face and witness the hard work take form in the pride that lights up your eyes. Doors have but one purpose, and that is to keep an adversary from those who can't defeat it.

My Beast

Austin Walters

Conceive a beast
that lurks beneath
cunning and hungry,
searching for meat.

Creeping around
below my house,
feeding on those
who'll never be found.

I capture men, women,
girls and boys,
keep them shelved like little toys.

'nd when the beast eats,
You'll hear him chew.
Crunching on someone,
Someone like you.

Oh! My beast has his fun
all while never seeing the sun.

He hunts at night,
When all are asleep,
Slips men from their beds-
With nary a peep.

With crackle of spine
As they're torn in two,
'nd blood all around,
Spilled anew!

After his meal
he goes to bed
waiting for evening,
when he'll be fed.

Jersey Seagull
Nicole Garriott

Dog Birds
Nicole Garriott

Where I Want to Be

Tay Bowen

I hear the vibrations of thunder.

The rain is knocking,
softly, softly,
at my rooftop...

And the sun shines,
I can feel her..
Though the clouds have masked
her pouring warmth.

Stillness surrounds me.
I nestle in its comfort,
a relief from the world outside.
And my heart..
(tick...tick...)
stays to its steady beat.

For I can always count on
steady beats.
Repetition stays
in my life,
like the endless tick
of the clock on the wall,
and the patterns teach me more
than you will ever know.

For all I know,
is that I know nothing.

And nothing is where
I want to be.

Coveting the World's Plate

Anonymous

Oh please, just spare
but one little taste?
Splash on my palate
of insightful chaste?

Flavors I savor;
a tang all their own,
Hitting the spot
with impact alone

Giving me sight
with closed eyes, you see?
The past, the future, the present—
All three.

Insatiable, famished
Begging for it all
Ravenous cravings
The mind excitedly sprawls

She's simply a whore,
so dive right in;
Release your greedy beast—
and let the feast begin!

Observation

Rachel Bené

"You guys don't even care! You just want to tell me what to do and yell at me when I'm not perfect!" I snap, throwing my arms up, tears starting to fall down my cheeks.

"Of course we care Rachel, we are your parents, we love you," my mother says, also tearing up.

"It doesn't feel like that to me, it feels like I have to be perfect to please you guys. It's like no matter what I do I'm always wrong," I say as I look away from everyone, sniffling in my tears. Then I glance over to the Linden Oaks counselor for some sort of support, wanting her to admit me, wishing she would make them make me stay. She's older, maybe mid-forties, with the looks of an Englishwoman. She just looks at me blankly from her desk, then looks at my parents. My parents are sitting on either side of me and in between the counselor and me. This leaves a very small window between them, making it hard for the counselor and I to see each other. The room is small, with grey everywhere: walls, carpet, ceiling.

"No one ever said you had to be perfect. We just expect you to do what you are told and follow the very simple rules we have in place for you," my father replies as he stares at me.

"And every time I make one little bitty mistake, I get punished for it like I committed a crime or something," I retort, shaking my head, trying to stare him down.

"That's never how it is. You know it and I know it," my father says, glaring back.

"Let's just go home and talk about it. Maybe we can work something out," my mother interjects.

"We should go home. There is no reason for Rachel to stay here and be evaluated," my father says, turning to the counselor, aiming the last few words at her.

"Sir, I cannot force you to admit her, I can only strongly advise it. Rachel, do you still feel like hurting yourself?" She turns to me, evaluating my response. My father and mother turn to me and the look in their eyes bears down on me.

"I just don't feel like my life is worth anything," I was saying to the

counselor directly behind the desk in front of me just ten minutes ago, two empty seats on either side of me.

"Do you feel like you want to end your life?" she asks.

"Yes, sometimes I do. I feel like there's no point to my life since I just fail at everything anyway," I say to her.

The counselor gets up and opens the door. She asks my parents to come into the room with us. "We would like to keep Rachel for observation. She says that she feels like hurting herself and that her life isn't worth living."

"What can we do?" My mother begs the counselor. They all sit down and my parents form their barrier between me and the counselor.

"Why can't we just take her home and talk to her? We are her parents and we are the ones responsible for her. This is ridiculous that you people won't tell us what she is saying," my father says combatively, glaring at the counselor, then at me.

"I'm sorry, sir, but that is the law," the counselor replies, holding her hand up gently.

"Rachel, what's going on?" my mother turns and asks me, eyes red.

"I just don't see the point anymore," I reply to her, shrugging my shoulders.

"There is a point, and you do not need to be admitted into counseling to figure that out. We are not admitting you and we are going home. This behavior will stop and we do not want to hear of you wanting to hurt yourself again, you understand?" my father interjects.

I am now looking away from them all at the paperweight on the counselor's desk, pausing for a moment. They are all still awaiting my response to the counselor's question. I look at the counselor, then my father, then my mother, feeling the pressure they are all putting on me.

"Well…I don't really feel like hurting myself I guess. I don't think I want to hurt anyone like that by doing that. I just feel helpless sometimes," I finally reply.

"Well then you can come and talk to us. That's what we're here for. We are your parents. We love you and we want to help you. We know you, you don't need to talk to some stranger that doesn't know you," my mother says to me with widened eyes, shooting a disapproving look at the counselor.

"Well, if she doesn't feel suicidal, we don't necessarily have to admit her. My suggestion is that you all go home and have a nice family

discussion and let all parties have a say," the counselor says, turning the last few words to my father. "And if you ever feel like hurting yourself again, just give me a call," she says as she hands me her card.

"Thank you," I say.

"Thank you ma'am. We hope to not see you again," my mother says, getting up to leave. I shoot the counselor one last shrug and a reassuring smile as she leads us all out the door.

I breathe out a sigh as my parents and I walk out to the car. I even smile to myself as I open the car door. My parents now at least know how I feel. "I'm sorry," I say to them.

"My God Rachel, we only want what's best for you," my mother turns around and says sternly, eyes still red with tears.

"I know Mom, I'm sorry. I just don't know how to talk to you guys. I just feel like I'm always messing up," I reply.

My mother rolls her eyes, "Well, get used to it. It's gonna happen," she retorts.

"I know Mom. I know life is worth living. It's not worth giving up," I reply.

"That's probably the most selfish thing you could do. Imagine how we would feel if you did that; how your sisters and brothers would feel," my father remarks. I look at him blankly as he turns around to give me a quick look. "Oh, didn't think of that, did you?" he smirks.

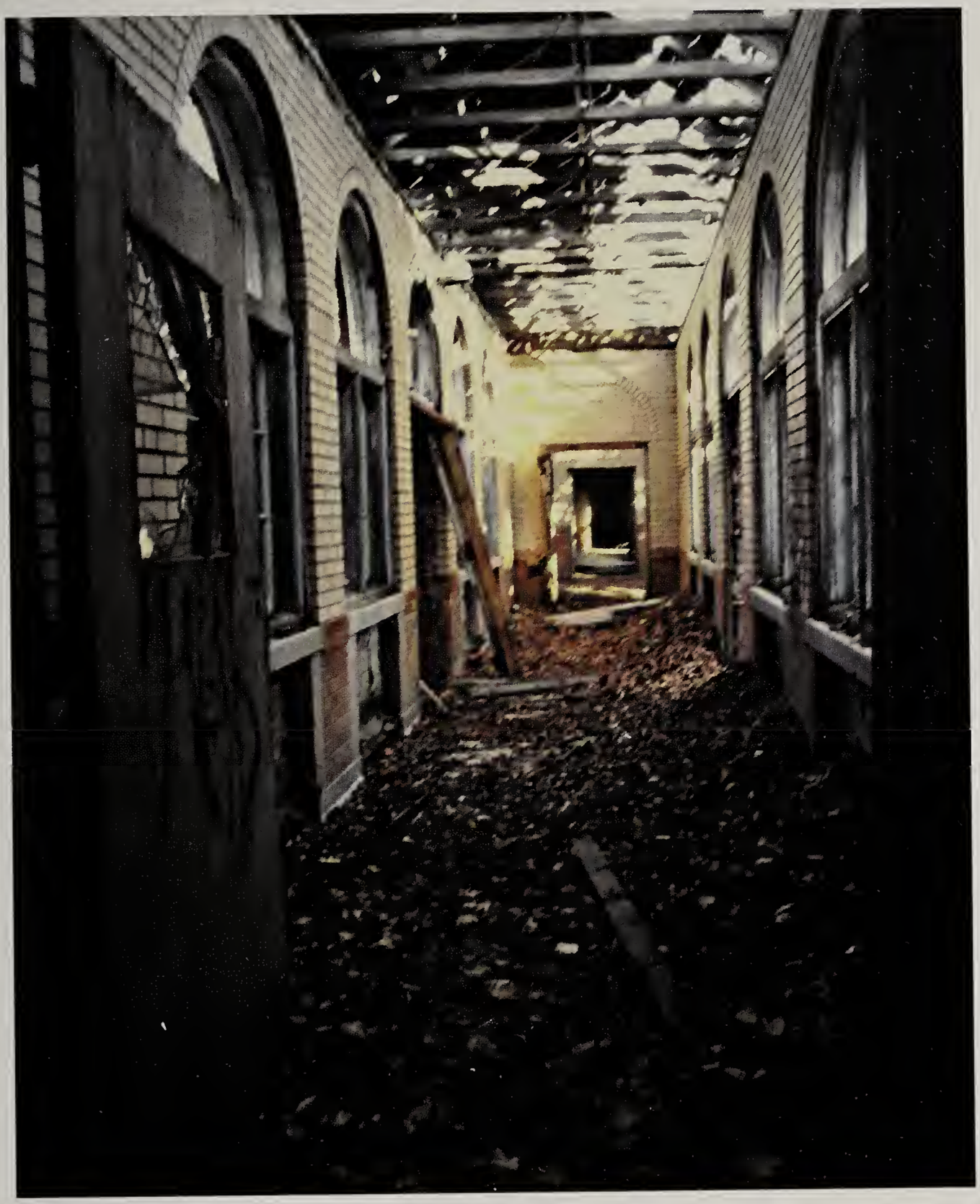
"No, I didn't. I didn't think it mattered," I reply, looking at my feet.

"Of course it matters Rachel Ann, we're your family," my mother says.

"I know Mom, I'm sorry. I know you guys love me. I love you. I'm so sorry," I say to her in between sobs, tears streaming down my face again.

"We should send you back to the Philippines, where you and I came from. Then you would really see how hard life can be," she says.

"No, I know I'm lucky, I'm very lucky. Thank you."



Down the Rabbit Hole
Kristen Kida

Of Eve

Kara Ponce

In soulful dreams
I awaken in the Garden
the fruit freshly fallen
from sticky fingertips,
and if I concentrate, I can still savor
its juice upon my slicken lips
Dearest husband.
Come, drink this in
taste of the knowledge, accept the sin.
From the tongues of serpents,
come taste of this fruit
born again from the branches of truth
In the shadows,
the Virgin Mary's weeping
her tears give birth
to a great flood that
falls from the heavens, that falls for me
Christ, build a bridge, so my soul you may keep
In twilight the Garden appears in passing
dreamt from the rustle of the angel's wings
whispering, whispering, awaken me
deliver me from sin, from blight
rising like pillars in the tower of Babel
Where is God this mortal night?
At the window
the moonlight enters, brushing past
a flock of clouds,
Floods the floor, bathing sinners
in the tears of Mary
Christen me Lord, in this light
On the nightstand
rests His bible
the night breeze flipping to Genesis
But if I concentrate I see Jesus
let death pass in the night
save my soul this immortal night

Grace

Emily Hansen

My knees dig into your fleshy thighs as I grip each side of your pig pink face

Silver spindle spun silky thread; threading, treading into your head
Tracing, I jump and jab into the middle of the prison painted room
Delirium, Diazepam dreams, Dark different dances drifting into schemes

Schizophrenic scaffolding falling on my head-dead but crazy…isn't really dead

Fisting fistulas subsequently cause snapping synapses in cerebellum coffins

Exploratory knuckles punch their way through the hellacious hippocampus

Pulling panting pieces by the end of their long winded histrionic pony tails

Salacious suburbia with words that mean nothing, but everything that I ever wanted

A storage cabinet on top of the medulla rotating with oblongata
Linguistic cheeks check out-check in-check out - - -we do not belong
Glassy & unmoving, unwilling to believe in a heart that will not beat
Paddling past childhood, chilling row boats-"chilling" Paddles…
charging to 300. 3 lives. 2. 1.

"She's dead."
The diggers come. Condolences & delusions are buried underneath the dirt.

Take a breath, deeper---deepest. Can you hold it forever? Fever , fell. Fever, hell.

Pastel Roses

Kristen Kida

If happiness was a place
They wouldn't let her in
If the gatekeeper was friend
She would be turned away
If love was a blanket
She would freeze
If light was a book
They wouldn't let her read
If joy was a rose
Her nose would be stuffed
If understanding was a river
The fish would die upon her touch
And if friendship was a pencil
She wouldn't know how to write

But if life were a field
She would always lie in it

Bright Lights

Terry L. Adams, Fine Arts Department

Nature's Kaleidoscope
Calvin Bonnema

green nostalgia

brian michael james smallwood

we laughed like hyenas in the tiger's gaze
walking thru fields
before they became green
w/ nostalgia
serenaded by the crackling sound
of suburban power lines

pulsating
extraterrestrial rhythms

all huddled together
w/ the curtains drawn

Lyra

Aaron Wiley

Lips red,
Like soldiers' blood -
Whom do they fight,
And who are they for?

"Lyra, kiss the ground."
The god's implore.
And when men battle,
She does.

Hands limp,
Like falling commands -
They brush the dirt
And cover her mouth.

Her hands turn
And sweep the kiss,
Where soldiers hurt
To die like this.

Her eyes, sharp
Like bullets.
They watch her hands
Blotch the red dirt.

"Close your eyes, Lyra."
The gods whisper.
Only when all have fallen,
She does.

Girl Water
Nicole Garriott

Invisible Bear

Kindra Schaefer

Once upon a time there was an invisible bear who wanted, more than anything, an invisible friend. But how does a bear go about finding that which cannot be seen? I mean, the other four senses can only take you so far.

Invisible friends. All vapor and smoke.

Being invisible is the opposite of being blind. Close your eyes for a second. Good. You can see nothing of the world, but the world can still see you. It's a different kind of loneliness. Now take that lonely feeling and turn it inside out. That's how the invisible bear feels most of the time.

The invisible bear never wandered far from his favorite stream. She was a young stream, full of bold and saucy twists and curves. An admirable stream. A stream with a mind of her own, so to speak. A stream that whispers and giggles over smooth, mossy, ageless stones. A good stream, as far as streams go, but still visible, if you know what I mean.

The invisible bear liked to gaze at his un-reflection in his favorite giggling stream. For hours it was just the two of them, the un-reflecting bear and the giggling stream.

Invisibility makes a bear free to be an un-bear. So, there's that. Look, now he's a leopard. Look, now he's the Big Dipper. Look, now he's a fish with teeth. But his invisible imagination could only travel so far. An invisible inner voice was always there to remind the bear that it's really only the giggling stream looking back at him.

Unrequited love. A real one-way street.

What a delight it would be to find an invisible friend, an invisible kindred spirit with an invisible soul to fit perfectly with his own!

One day, a boy wandered into the invisible bear's forest. When the boy walked, his feet had trouble leaving the ground. It was like he was afraid of disconnecting from the earth for too long. And he always looked down. Perhaps he found what was happening on the ground more interesting than what was happening in other places.

The invisible bear followed the boy. It was easy. Finally he had found something that made his invisibility an advantage – following lost little

boys with their feet stuck to the ground. Sometimes, the bear would throw a rock or snap a twig, just to get the boy to look up from the ground he found so interesting. Maybe the boy couldn't see me, he thought, but he can see the result of my actions. And that's something, the bear thought to his invisible self. That's surely something.

The nights began to grow cold in the invisible bear's forest. The bear's giggling stream grew icy and sharp. Distant. The boy had a carpet of brittle fallen leaves to make his beloved ground more interesting. How the boy felt about this, the invisible bear couldn't tell. It didn't vary his routine at all. Strange.

But at night the boy would shiver. He would curl up on the ground he couldn't tear his eyes from and he would shiver. In his sleep he would also shiver. Every night, he shivered on his beloved ground with its blanket of brown papery leaves.

The invisible bear sat against a nearby tree and watched the boy shiver. Night after night, the boy would shiver and the bear would watch. He didn't know what to do. The bear started leaving a circle of berries and acorns for the boy to find. The boy would wake up in the morning, eat the berries, and put the acorns in his pocket. Then he'd curl up at night and shiver in his sleep.

One night, the invisible bear had an idea. The bear leaned back against his perfectly visible nearby tree, the boy shivered next to his circle of berries and acorns, and he had an idea. Just like that. The invisible bear got up and lay across the shivering boy. Diagonally. He was very careful not to crush the boy with his invisible weight. The boy stopped shivering, almost at once. Result! You'd be surprised at the warmth and comfort hiding in the invisible belly-fur of an invisible bear. The boy stopped shivering. It was something. Hell, it was more than something. It was a miracle. The bear hadn't been seen, but he'd been felt. Not seen, but felt. That's surely something.

What magic is there in being seen, anyway?

A Poet's Dream

Samuel Bull

A title forms teasingly
the reply's sighs forth
the greatest poem ever
but the page is blank
the words are missing
How could this be!?
My soul screams out
and then I awake,
and find nothing.
boy I hate that
the feeling
of loss

Stalk in Solitude

Kate Muller

center of attention
Calvin Bonnema

ROWS OF STONE

Teresa Pluth

So neatly row by row they line up like soldiers
of stone all different shapes, sizes and colors carved in detail.
And she sits in the folding chair while I tend the garden of geraniums
that needed pruning beneath the Gaelic cross towering above us,
smooth, polished granite intricately carved and calming.
The edging is spruced up and tidied to her satisfaction while we
chat about people and times past and present.
The wind blows through her thin strands of grey, red dyed hair
that she does herself at eighty-seven years young, wearing a folded bandana.
I walk away to fill the water pail and look back to see not one statue,
but two - both so still except for the wind in her hair and the tall geraniums.
Her thoughts are far away at another time and place with the love
of her life, the man of her dreams and I walk up with the pail of water
and she comes back to me and the geraniums blowing in the wind.

The Battlefield He Took Home

Denisse Martinez

Blond. Gold. Tons and tons and tons more- of yellow, fair yellow, mustard yellow, tawny lemon. She had so much hair, this beautiful girl lying next to him in the pale evening light. He could get lost in her curls, lost in her smell, in her half-hidden face covered by the soft fabric of her pillow- that muffled the sound of her promise not to fall asleep.

"I'll just close my eyes for a second," she said. Two hours ago.

Still, he sat there, next to her. Feeling her chest rise and fall in even rhythm.

Inhale, exhale.

Peacefully.

He never thought he'd be the one to watch a girl sleep, but now and then he'd steal a glance. He couldn't help it. His hands twisted in her hair, feeling how soft it was. He knew it was the wine taking effect, the soft glow of the light coming gently through the window shades making her looks like this. He knew it was the smooth music playing behind his head and the romanticized idea of good bye that made her look so stunning. Still, she was so troubled, so fierce, so strong, so beautiful and noble, but still, innocent.

She was everything he wasn't and he knew he could not help her any more. He was only holding her back. She was no longer staying out of love. No. Love had died along with the part of him he left in the battle field.

Along with his ability to move his limbs, or his ability to hear cars backfire without breaking into tears. Along with a great part of his sanity, and his ability to feel.

He was 22 years old. Only twenty fucking two. Yet he had seen most of the world and more of humanity-or lack thereof- than most middle aged men.

He had seen men piss on cadavers, slap women around. He had witnessed his own comrades become shallow, empty, numb. In order to survive the horror their eyes showed them. Counting skeletons like a child's game. Taking bets on who would come home. Forgetting

names, and replacing them with unit numbers instead. Within their hollow caves, they saw no ending near. They forgot the purpose of the mission as everyday was a fight against natural enemies: the wind, the scorching sun and freezing nights. Every day pushed them further from home, instead of the other way around.

Eighteen years old, straight out of high-school. He was never too good at school, only mediocre at sports. He thought he could make a difference. The recruiter took his chance.

Fresh meat, easy target.

The whole town stood behind as this child departed. To fight a war we did not know much about. One that politics created, whose policy made no sense.

His mother, she never breathed the same. Air was always gushing out of her, releasing in a hurry a breath she hadn't noticed she was holding in. She could hold them for days, weeks, months. Hold them until that next phone call.

And in her dreams, she'd scream.

The monsters in her closet took the shape of triangle folded flags. In her dreams, she'd twist and stir beneath cold, clammy sheets. Her husband would hold her tight. After a while, he had stop saying it would all be okay. He stopped believing it himself. Still, the first year or two were just of training; he was home often. He was safe. As safe as you can be as they train you to kill. Still, two years later, he was sent off.

Mandatory 8 months abroad they said. Then he'll be home again. It's all downhill from now - they said. It'll all be over soon.

Eight months turned into ten, those turned into a year.

Extra pay, they said. We need our men. The war is almost over, they told his mom-who was quickly running out of air.

In the 11th month, a mission was rushed. One last panicked attempt. The car he was in, they made believe was bullet-proof and safe, destroyed. Shards and scraps of metal entered his brain and legs as he rolled away from the quick fire. He was never the same.

Four short years after he had signed away his life, he lays in bed with invisible itches on his left amputated leg. The ghosts of his past haunting him at night. Impotence burning deep in knowing that

he can never be anything else. Here, in the bed of his high school sweetheart, the girl he loved the most. Down the street from his mom's house, where dreams still haunt the woman that loved him most.

He sits in a bed of comfort. Inhaling her sent, memorizing the hypnotizing way her hair curls around his hands. His bright blue eyes now dull, his strength gone. Like the air that left his mother's lungs that dreaded moment she had gotten the call. Her baby was coming home. Well, most of him, anyway. She didn't know which option was worse.

And this beautiful girl next to him, she was no longer staying out of love. Pity and sorrow colored her tone. Duty and sympathy guided her eyes away from his legs. This lovely girl with the flowing long blond hair, she was no longer staying out of love. No. Love had died in the battlefield he took home.

And this old solider, stuck in the body of a 22 year old. He wasn't staying. No. He was leaving. Quietly. Out of love.

Show Me Your Face

Erin Foley

Twenty Steps

Mike Bonifacio

The car was gone and Martin would have to walk this morning, but it was an unseasonably warm day and the sun had already erased any evidence for the cold proclivity of the season. The sunshine did little to warm him, however, and he was anxious. The man made his way down the stairway from the landing of his rented second story studio apartment, hearing but not listening to the broken English of the family that lived below him. He stepped through the gate of a chain-linked fence which by design and intent was supposed to guard his apartment and few remaining possessions, but which served only to attract the neighborhood's unruly residents; those on two legs and four.

Fashionable shoes carried his lean six-foot frame through the neighborhood, past seven boarded-up homes—he had to count them every time he walked by—and into the downtown district of the city. He was lighter on his feet these days; partly because he could no longer afford to eat sushi, and partly because his pack-a-week cigarette habit had ramped up to a full pack-a-day. Avoiding the thought of this morning's appointment exhausted his concentration and he was only passively aware of the dissonant noise that tumbled about in a torpid recess of his brain. Maybe it was just the sound of his stomach growling and reverberating through his bones; he needed to eat.

A once thriving hub, the city had been reduced to an odd mix of resale shops, ethnic fast food establishments, and a smattering of strip-mall churches. The only sign of economic life was a small contingent of vendors who ambitiously set up each Wednesday morning in front of the old theatre. They sat beneath a sign that read 'Farmers Market', which looked to be constructed out of a discarded flat screen television box, turned inside out. The harvest was negligible this early in April, with only bunches of greens and baked goods scattered atop the few tables. He spied an assortment of muffins and could smell the robust and pleasant aroma of coffee brewing, dominating the odor of his expensive cologne.

"Beautiful day" the man behind the table announced with a crisp

smile.

"Yeah," he said diffidently, not meeting the vendor's eyes. He studied the selection of muffins and made a desultory selection. "Can I getta cuppa coffee too," he added. His pronunciation of coffee sounded like 'caawfeee'. Just speaking took effort these days and his unsteady speech matched his maudlin thoughts.

"Of course!" the vendor replied and then handed him the steaming cup along with a muffin.

The exchange of money took place during which time the vendor's gaze lingered on Martin. He watched him take the first scalding sip, recognizing the man's detachment and hopelessness: I know buddy, life'sa bitch.

"You have a nice day," the coffee vendor offered with true sincerity.

Martin stepped away, raised his left hand—the one holding the coffee—and offered a vague gesture of thanks. He savored the muffin and made sure crumbs were not lodged at the corners of his mouth by peering into the window of a vacated store. His reflection startled him. His eyes were sunken, along with his cheeks, punctuating the sallow look his face had taken on in the last few months. I need to quit smoking, he thought, knowing that smoking had nothing to do with it. But he was well groomed with his hair styled in the appropriate way and his face freshly shaven. He focused his attention away from his reflection and through the pane of glass into the deserted store. It was one of those mom-and-pop hardware stores that could no longer compete with the big box stores. Everything had been cleared out except for a tangle of wire and a couple of very old-looking display cabinets. The smell of mildew emanated from beyond the door. Behind the cabinet he could just make out the unmistakable red of a kid's wagon. It was missing the left front wheel. He let out a little snort and continued on.

The coffee was working efficiently and he could feel the caffeine waking his sluggish consciousness. The discordant noise in the pit of his brain started to take on the form of a melody, but he couldn't quite place it yet. He passed through the shadow of a building to feel sunshine suddenly assault him. He stopped and in a singular motion and turned to face the sun. With his eyes closed, he felt the warming rays radiate beyond his skin into a deeper place. The next moment

he heard the chirping of birds—where were they before?—as their calls surrounded him and echoed off the high brick walls in a spirited chorus.

It was time to move on, yet he continued to listen with enthusiastic ears as the birds voiced their opinions and concerns. He reached his destination. As he waited, seated at the bottom of the steps, the melody that pervaded his thoughts assembled itself into something he recognized. He hummed along and alternately tapped his feet in a syncopated beat. Of course! he thought, Stravinsky! It was from a tape his mother had played long ago, each weekend during spring as she tended their garden. She would always plant white geraniums in that little wagon! he remembered, amused.

"Martin?" He jerked his head to the side, surprised to hear his name.

"Oh, hey," he replied, still tapping his feet. Martin stood up and dusted off his backside. "Well, I guess it's about that time," he said to his attorney.

"It is. Are you ready?" the lawyer asked while he checked his watch.

"Yeah, I guess so. Let's get it over with." Stravinsky's Rite of Spring still filled his head with euphonic rhythm as Martin, curiously emboldened, led the way. He bounded up the twenty marble steps—he counted them—to the courthouse doors. His bankruptcy hearing was to start promptly at ten.

Onetwentyfour

Simone McConnell

The day you died it snowed. It snowed through the night, to the next day; all the next day. It snowed that night and for a week. It was like without you, the world couldn't bear its cold heart anymore. The sky opened up and mourned for you. It sobbed and screamed for you. The sky split and poured out its sympathies, its heartaches, its pain. They trickled down in soft, fluffy flakes, pure and white, like crystal for angels. It covered the dirt and froze.

The day after you died I walked out into the woods; tangled myself in the trees, the roots, dead branches. I waded out past the break, stood weightless and froze to my waist. I looked out on the sea of smooth, perfect white, and dug my right hand into my chest; scratched away the skin, pulled and ripped through the veins, broke fingernails on the bone. I spread my fingers; opened up as wide as it would go. And though I heard the cracking, the tearing, and the popping; and though I felt the rush of red warmth, the yanking, and the squishing - I scooped out my heart and placed it, beating, in the snow. After, I stood back to watch a deep red stain envelop the seamless white, till all of the woods had been swallowed, till I had drowned.

Sometimes when I breathe, it's your breath. I can feel it fill me up, flood every crevice of my insides. It burns like fire, you burn like fire. And as it leaves me, I feel cold and empty.

So empty I could echo.

Like the hollow men, with heads filled with straw. Except not you, 'cause you set yours on fire, you set yours on fire and ran - and you couldn't set mine on fire?

Too empty and I echo.

My enemy, the dentist

Natasha Fedosenko

Going to the dentist turns my day into misery. First, going into the unique smell of the waiting room makes me sick. Then I sit in the big blue chair. Shivers come to my body when the lady comes over. When the dental hygienist cleans my teeth with the certain toothpaste it tastes very yucky. Fluoride lives, a nasty taste in my mouth. Finally the dentist says just bite down for a minute and spit. After an hour I am through my worst enemy.

Flip-Flop Focus

Kate Muller

Lilac Tree
Gina Caponigro

Emosis

Stephanie Conroy

Words pass between my rock and hard place with aqueous ease
Dollops of emotional outlet drip from ink stained digits
Seeping limbs leak accumulated agony, built up against its concentration gradient
Facilitated diffusion via cerebral osmosis

Back Field Adventures

Kate Muller

When I Return To You

Erick Shaffern

When the Joliet moon
Whistles and howls
And the poison drips
From a rude dog's jowls
And from the sewers leaps
Out a smell so foul
That's when I return to you

In deep nights I see
Sharp pistols and swords
And all empty churches
Though their filled by hordes
And everyone's claiming
They've got the real Lord
That's when I return to you

When blood is the cost
Of a jewel and a ring
And all the men bow
To their Marlboro queen
And my hot dripping sights
Are the same as my dreams
That's when I return to you

Wordeater #125 & Fall '11 E-Zine Awards

Poetry

The John Stobart Award for Poetry was established in honor of the founder and guiding light of Wordeater. He retired from JJC's English/World Languages Department in 1999 having sponsored 106 issues.

Mike Bonifacio	The Blowout
Emily Hansen	Grace
Kara Ponce	Jury Duty
Aaron Wiley	Hill-Top Ballet

Prose

Rachel Bené	Observation
Simone McConnell	Onetwentyfour
Erick Shaffern	Moonbeams (For Bessie Smith)
J.M.U.	A Careful Brush

Visual Arts

Nicole Garriott	Dog Birds
Sara Schwartz	Bear Light
Kristen Kida	Down the Rabbit Hole

Juror

A.J. Heidenreich
Associate Professor of English

wordeater.org

See & hear the multimedia Fall '11 E-Zine

Submission Guidelines

Wordeater is always accepting submissions for its next print and e-zine issues. Wordeater is published in May and December.

Wordeater accepts poetry, prose fiction, creative nonfiction, essays, reviews, art, photography, comics, music, spoken word recordings, short films, and other multi-media for publication consideration.

All written work must be word-processed in Word (.doc) or Rich Text Format (.rtf) and submitted through wordeater@jjc.edu.

All multimedia must be submitted in appropriate formats either through wordeater@jjc.edu or CD/DVD to Adam Heidenreich (C-1063).

All work must be original and unpublished. Artists retain all rights to their own work and may publish it in other media.

Submissions may include a brief "About the Artist" biography (50 words or less), a digital photo, and a link to a web page for promotional purposes. This content will be included if the work is chosen for the e-zine.

Please include a separate cover letter with your name, address, email, phone number, and titles of the work you submit. Please identify yourself as a current student, alumni, or a present or former faculty or staff member. Works will be judged anonymously by the student Editorial Board. There is no limit on the number of submissions, but it is suggested artists submit only a representative collection.

Except for original artwork, submissions will not be returned.

Editorial changes may be made for readability and presentation.

All work must be submitted through wordeater@jjc.edu or sent to Adam Heidenreich, Assistant Professor of English, Wordeater Advisor (C-1063), in appropriate digital format (CD or DVD) or with instructions for scanning or digital photography.

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